

## **P-37: Adult Enabling & Youth Access to Tobacco**

**Venue:** Community

**Goal:** Preventing Initiation of Tobacco Use

**Sponsoring Organization:** Public Health – Seattle & King County

**Abstract:** Public Health – Seattle & King County (PHSKC) awarded the Des Moines Police Department a \$20,000 grant to implement a component of their tobacco prevention program. Three areas were targeted for enforcement: (1) to implement proper tobacco youth law signage and enforce laws restricting sales to minors as part of tobacco retailer compliance checks; (2) to enforce youth possession laws; and (3) to conduct reverse stings for store patrons purchasing tobacco for minors. PHSKC also conducted a complementary awareness campaign to educate the community about existing youth tobacco access and possession laws. The project has proven to be successful in increasing the number of youth contacts, increasing compliance among retailers, improving retailer education and decreasing the number of sources youth have for acquiring tobacco.

**Recommendations:** Work with local interested police departments, identify local stakeholders, and be willing to take a leadership role and work to gain support for the project. Seek to implement enforcement activities in a way that will be sustainable, so that they occur with or without direct funding. Efforts to reduce youth access to tobacco should include addressing retailer and social sources, as well as by generating community awareness about existing policies.

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